

Waste Reduction Task Force

Goal and Methodology Work Group #1

Work Group #1 held a group conference call on Friday February the 15th to discuss potential recommendation to the Task Force:

All members were in attendance. Nick Lytle from TDEC acted as facilitator. The following were the points discussed for submittal to the Task Force for further input:

Potential recommendations to the Solid Waste Disposal Control Board concerning Tennessee's future solid waste land filling reduction goals as prescribed in Senate Bill 2267 which states the follow:

The General assembly recognizes that the ways in which solid waste is generated and managed are very dynamic. The opportunities for recycling and for reduction of waste generated change with both market factors and technological developments. These in turn, affect the costs of solid waste management and recycling. Also there are many factors that change the feasibility of different approaches among the counties, in addition to population and amount of commercial and industrial activity, these include proximity to markets for recyclable materials and the solid waste activities of municipalities. In order to better address all of these changing circumstances, the solid waste disposal control board is authorized to adopt a rule promoting recycling and waste reduction. In so doing, the board shall consider the use of incentives, disincentives, public education, costs and benefits of recycling, and the widely varying circumstances of the different solid waste regions. Upon the effective date of such rule, the provisions of subsection (a) through (f) of this section, 68-211-861, will be repealed and of no further force and effect and the rule will be enforceable according to its terms and in accordance with section 68-211-816.

Recommendation 1: Measurement Method Toward Positive Gains in Landfill Tonnage Reduction

Justification:

During the proceeding of the Solid Waste Reduction Task Force, the following items have been mostly agreed upon by the members:

-Although most counties/municipalities strive to provide the best level of waste reduction programs to their residents, *universal* exact measurement of the tonnages of these programs is difficult and not always done in a universal manner. Furthermore; once a reporting entity begins to attempt to collect data from recycling programs outside of its control the margin for errors increases.

-Collection of data from private sources is incomplete, thus leading to estimation and undercounting. It can be argued that reporting of some of this data is better than no data; however without a complete reporting of all private recycling data; strict compliance to a recycling rate becomes arbitrary.

-The flow of commodities between various levels of buyers, brokers, processors, and collectors gives way to tracking problems, whereas, at the state level verification of completely accurate numbers pertaining to commodity tonnages become impossible.

-The most accurate solid waste tonnages comes from Class I landfills where tonnage reporting can be collected from various sources including origin reports, APR's and tipping fee surcharge reports.

-Cross county origin reporting of Class I landfill tonnages remains a concern, as county boundaries are crossed by haulers and lumping of waste at transfer station.

Based upon the bulleted items above, it can be concluded that the best and most accurate piece of data from solid waste disposal and waste reduction efforts comes from Class I landfills, furthermore, the aggregated total of all Class I landfills utilized by Tennessee Regions.

The spirit of the waste reduction goal is to ultimately reduce the amount of waste being landfilled, and increase reduction, reuse, recycling and other activities which lead to reduction in landfilling.

In 2006, Tennessee has a Class I per capita disposal rate of 1.12 tons per person per year. The rules adopted by the Solid Waste Control Board should aim to reduce that number.

Recommendation 1: The measurement method by which positive gains toward waste reduction should be measure in Tennessee should be based upon a decrease in the current 1.12 tons per capita disposed of on a statewide level into Class I landfills.

For example:

Waste Reduction Goal as measure by Class I landfill disposal:

Year	Goal (Tons Per Person)
2006	1.12
2012	Lower than 2006 TBD
2018	Lower than 2012 TBD
2024	Lower than 2018 TBD

Recommendation 2: Method through which the Goal shall be obtained.

Justification:

Once a goal is passed and agreed upon, a very clear and concrete method to achieve this goal, or to assist in achieving this goal must be formulated and promoted. To proclaim that the State has a Waste Reduction mandate without a method for achieving this goal will not have a high chance of being successful.

Existing grants and additional grants to improve recycling facilities, buy recycling equipment, provide for technical assistance and monies to upstart new programs is only one piece in obtaining a measurable amount of waste reduction.

Recommendation 2: TDEC will help from other agencies, should produce an easily adoptable “program based” methodology to achieve waste reduction to the landfills. In the methodology, TDEC will provide detailed instruction and assistance to municipalities and counties in adopting one of many “pre-packaged” programs.

For example:

TDEC might devise a series of 10 programs that are favorable toward keeping material out of landfills.

-Information, grants, and assistance in setting up local composting programs.

-Grants assistance and instructions on how to collect OCC from area businesses with minimal staff time and possible making the program self-funding.

-Many More.....

Potential recommendations to the Solid Waste Disposal Control Board not directly related to the Goals or Methodology:

Recommendation 3: Class III/IV landfill accountability:

Justification:

Use Class III/IV landfills under current waste reduction rules have been labeled as a “waste diversion” practice. The waste reduction task force have so far come to a near unanimous agreement that “landfilling is landfilling” and that Class III/IV landfills should not be utilized as a shelter from waste reduction goals, and a method to enlarge once waste diversion practices on paper.

Class III/IV landfills do not have all have scales. They also do not currently report on waste origins or tonnages to TDEC making their practices difficult to track. Class III/IV landfills, though of less environmental impact than Class I landfills, need to have better accountability to the citizens of Tennessee.

Recommendation 3: In the permitting process, Class III/IV landfills should be required to report the origin of all waste received, accurate tonnages of waste. Furthermore, Class III/IV landfill material should not be counted towards waste diversion, or waste reduction goals unless a certain amount of that material is shown to have been recycled towards a beneficial end-use and not simply placed in the ground. Whether Class III/IV landfill material should count negatively toward disposal or simply disregarded is still undecided.